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How Trudeau's lies differ from Trump's lies

by Paul George

While Trump is a compulsive liar, Trudeau is a consummate actor. Trump sometimes knows he's lying. At other times he doesn't know the answer to a question, so makes one up, not really caring if the answer is true or not. Trudeau, however, always follows a script. "He's given lines, memorizes them, spouts them faithfully, and never questions whether they're grounded in truth or not," explains a drama teacher. "He is not the bright original thinker like his father was, but he acts well and is super photogenic."

His acting background explains why Trudeau championed stricter measures to limit global temperature rise to a maximum 1.5 degrees C in Paris in 2015. He gave such a passionate speech that gave hope to the island states and coastal communities that will be flooded by rising sea levels if global warming reaches 2 degrees C.

Newspaper headlines at the time declared "Canada is Back." After years of hardline obstruction and inaction by the Harper government, Canada said it was going to provide world leadership on solving the climate crisis and take bold action in reducing its own GHG emissions. Our Prime Minister emerged as the hope of all those who understood the severity of the climate crisis

In Paris, Trudeau must have relied on Green Party MP Elizabeth May for his lines.

When Trudeau got back to Ottawa, he got a new set of scriptwriters: the same back-room oil sands promoters and lobbyists that had Harper in their pockets. No problem for Trudeau. He parroted his new lines with no thought, no understanding, nor any worry that his new script contradicted his lines in Paris. "Of course we can build the Kinder Morgan pipeline and increase production of tar sands oil and still meet our Paris commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions enough to keep global warming to below 1.5 degrees C" says Trudeau with complete confidence.

Over the 2005–2016 period, total emissions decreased by 28 megatonnes (Mt) or 3.8%. Our 2030 goal is to reduce emissions by 30%. Recently emissions have increased and can be attributed to increases in mining and upstream oil and gas production (21 Mt).

Canada's Crazy Climate Plan

Like having your cake while eating it too, a country that fails to reduce enough Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to help slow global warming as promised in signing the Paris Climate Accord, has a "back doorway" way to accomplish the same thing.

How? Get someplace else to reduce an equivalent amount of emissions (above and beyond what that place already is doing under the Paris Accord), to make up for the shortfall.

Canada's emissions have been going up, not coming down in recent years. In 2016 Canada said it would miss its target by 44 megatonnes of carbon. Now it's 66 megatonnes!



In documents released through Freedom of Information (FOI), Canada, knowing full well that its tar sands expansion plans are incompatible with its 2030 (only 12 years away) reduction goals to reduce its emissions 30% below Canada's 2005 level, determined it would be cheaper to have California do the job. Canada will pay Californians billions of dollars a year to generate more renewable wind and solar energy and transition faster to fully electric vehicles. California gets all the new jobs and the cheaper power benefits. Alberta gets rid of its bitumen.

Brilliant. Oil barons of the Alberta tar patch get richer while regular Canadians get poorer through greatly increased taxes. In the long run this short-term offset solution will make it all the harder and more expensive in the future for Canada to make the transition to the low carbon world economy.

One big problem! With Trump pulling out of the Paris Climate Accord, California no longer qualifies as a surrogate reducer!

Standing Rock of the North

The biggest threat to the proposed x-KM pipeline route may be the fierce opposition of the Secwepemc people whose unceded territory, Secwepemcul'ecw, covers more than half of the proposed pipeline route.

Not only did the Canadian government approve the

pipeline despite the lack of this Indigenous Nation's consent. It utterly failed to adequately consult the Secwepemc.

Back in 1951, when the federal government unilaterally approved the original Trans Mountain pipeline through Secwepemcul'ecw, the Secwepemc people could not oppose it because the Indian Act prohibited Indigenous peoples in Canada from organizing on land issues and hiring lawyers. The original Trans Mountain pipeline went into operation in 1953 without the Secwepemc people's consent. The Secwepemc are determined that history will not repeat itself.

Defense of their territory is not something new for the Secwepemc.

A standoff between the Secwepemc and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1995 at Ts'Peten (Gustafsen Lake) involved the largest paramilitary operation in Canadian history.

Most recently, the Secwepemc Women Warrior Society disrupted the 2017 Annual General Meeting of Imperial Metals over their tailings pond spill at Mount Polley in Secwepemcul'ecw.

If the Canadian government makes good on its threat of using executive force and militarized action to force the pipeline through, the spectre of a "Standing Rock of the North" looms large.

Secwepemc land defenders are building "tiny houses." The Tiny House Warriors have built the first of ten which they plan to place along the pipeline route.

This tactic was learned from a similar maneuver at Standing Rock. The tiny houses are lawful structures according to the jurisdiction of the Secwepemc. Any outfit that takes over the Kinder Morgan pipeline route faces the spectre of having to physically remove the houses or request deployment of security forces to do so. Not only will this delay pipeline construction, it could open the company up to civil and criminal charges.

Secwepemc land defenders vow they will stop the pipeline "by any means necessary."

Excerpted from and based on: An updated Summary Risk Assessment of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Prepared by the Indigenous

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cover photo by Jake Wright



Two Thousand people gathered at the No Bail Out for Pipelines flash rally near Science World just 12 hours after Finance Minister Morneau announced Ottawa's intention to buy Kinder Morgan's pipeline project. It was hosted by Coastal Protectors, one of the many organizations opposed to the proposed increase in bitumen tanker traffic and pipeline expansion. On May 10, a peaceful Stop Kinder Morgan rally on Burnaby Mountain attracted over 15,000 people. Photo by David Huntley.

The hidden carbon cost of everyday products

by Kai Whiting and Luis Gabriel Carmona



Often, no one is held accountable for the carbon emissions connected to these materials because they are produced in countries where “dirty” industry is still politically acceptable or seen as the only way to escape poverty. In fact, of the carbon emissions that European consumers are personally responsible for, around 22% are allocated elsewhere under conventional carbon accounting practices. For consumers in the US, the figure is around 15%.

From mine to dump

Carbon emissions from the exhaust pipe tell only part of the story. To get a full sense of the carbon footprint of a car, you have to consider those emissions that go into producing the raw materials and digging a hole in the ground twice:

once to extract the metals contained in the car, once to dump them when they can no longer be recycled.


Buying a new car and dumping the old one might be justifiable if the change was made because the new vehicle is more fuel efficient, but it certainly isn't when it's a question of personal taste or corporate-level planned obsolescence. The same is true for any number of high-tech items, including smartphones that run on software that renders them unusable in the medium term. The environmental consequences of replacing a smartphone, in terms of carbon emissions alone, are considerable. Apple found that 83% of the carbon dioxide associated with the iPhone X was directly linked to manufacture, shipping and recycling. With these kinds of figures, it is hard to argue a sustainable case for upgrades, regardless of how many solar panels Apple sticks on the roof of its offices.

Governments of richer countries that

import products, but not their emissions, must stop pointing the finger at China or other manufacturing or mining giants and start taking responsibility. This means going further than they have been willing to go so far and implementing sustainable material strategies that address a product's entire lifecycle from mining to manufacturing, use and eventually to disposal.



Apple found that 83% of the carbon dioxide associated with the iPhone X was directly linked to manufacture, shipping and recycling. With these kinds of figures, it is hard to argue a sustainable case for upgrades, regardless of how many solar panels Apple sticks on the roof of its offices.

On an individual level, people must vote with their money. It's time to leave behind the laggards who hide the cost of the carbon contained within their products and who design them to fail in order to put profits before people and the environment. 

Source: <https://theconversation.com>

Kai Whiting is a Sustainability and Stoicism Researcher at the University of Lisbon. **Luis Gabriel Carmona** is a Researcher in Sustainable Systems at the same university.

The targets set in the Paris Agreement on climate change are ambitious, but necessary. Failure to meet them will lead to widespread drought, disease and desperation in some of the world's poorest regions. Under such conditions, mass migration by stranded climate refugees is almost inevitable.

Yet if richer nations are to be serious in their commitment to the Paris target, they must begin to account for the carbon emissions contained within products they import. Heavy industry and the constant demand for consumer goods are key contributors to climate change. In fact, 30% of global greenhouse gas emissions are produced through the process of converting metal ores and fossil fuels into the cars, washing machines and electronic devices that help prop up the economy and make life a little more comfortable.

As one might expect, the wealthier

parts of the world with their higher purchasing power do more than their fair share of consuming and polluting. For every item bought or sold, there is a rise in GDP, and with each one percent increase in GDP, there is a corresponding 0.5 to 0.7% rise in carbon emissions. The growing demand for day-to-day conveniences exacerbates this problem. For metal ores alone, the extraction rate more than doubled between 1980 and 2008, and it shows no sign of slowing.

Every time you buy a new car, for instance, you effectively mine 3-7g of “platinum group metals” to coat the catalytic converter. The six elements in the platinum group have the greatest environmental impact of all metals and producing just one kilo requires the emission of thousands of kilos of CO₂.

That car also consumes one tonne of steel and you can add to that some aluminium, a whole host of plastics and, in the case of electric cars, rare earth elements.



Blackmail and bailouts in the Kinder Morgan pipeline saga

by Thomas Davies | photo by Jake Wright

You couldn't blame someone for checking, but it was a week late for April Fool's Day when Kinder Morgan put out an incredible press release announcing it was suspending all "non-essential spending" on its Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project. Blaming big delays due to opposition, they said they would be meeting with investors and stakeholders to decide by May 31 regarding the future of the project.

The Liberals immediately held an emergency cabinet meeting. They emerged promising to meet behind closed doors with Kinder Morgan to try and figure out the government's next moves to push the project through.

What Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced one month later surpassed even the most cynical observers' wildest predictions. The Federal government is buying the existing 67 year old Trans Mountain pipeline from Kinder Morgan for \$4.5 billion dollars, as well as taking over the entire expansion project. Taxpayers are now on the hook for the whole thing, and cautious estimates put the real costs of completing the project to an additional \$15-20 billion!

Always in the Pocket

PM Trudeau's first scandal was just before he was elected in 2015. His national campaign co-chair Dan Gagner was forced to resign when it was discovered that during the campaign he was also being paid to advise people behind the Energy East pipeline on how to lobby a new Liberal government.

As Andrew Nikifork wrote in the Tyee, "Canada has already granted Kinder Morgan several subsidies. In 2011 the National Energy Board (NEB) granted Kinder Morgan a special fee of approximately \$1.45 a barrel to help fund the company's participation in the regulatory review of the Trans Mountain pipeline. By 2014 Kinder Morgan confirmed that it had collected \$132 million in fees." So, the government gave the oil corporation our tax dollars as subsidies, in order to not spend any of its own money going through the necessary review process?

Who's Driving This Thing?

Recent revelations have shown how far on board with Kinder Morgan the Trudeau government was before the approval. The National Observer revealed that on Octo-

ber 17, 2016, weeks before the Trudeau government approved the pipeline, assistant deputy minister Erin O'Gorman of the Department of Natural Resources instructed her staff to, "give cabinet the legally-sound basis for saying yes to Kinder Morgan's pipeline." This was while the government met with representatives of impacted indigenous nations and promised that no decision had yet been made on the pipeline.

Meet the Kinder

"We wanted to drive home one culture here: Cheap. Cheap. Cheap," - Richard Kinder, CEO of Kinder Morgan

Kinder Morgan is the biggest pipeline company in the US. Richard Kinder and Bill Morgan are ex-Enron Executives. Enron is the infamous energy trader whose collapse after being found guilty of account fraud and corruption cost shareholders \$74 billion and killed 20,000 jobs. Kinder himself has a net worth of \$8.2 billion.

That's who PM Trudeau went to bat for, with billions of our taxpayer dollars.

There's a dual game of dismissal of the opposition to the Kinder Morgan pipeline going on. The

government and industry refuses to acknowledge the mass opposition movement which is currently focused on the company's tank farm and marine terminal at the foot of Burnaby Mountain. Mass rallies of thousands, over 200 arrests for defying a court-imposed 5-meter "buffer zone" around Kinder Morgan's property, and ongoing actions by an Indigenous-led movement is growing.


The opposition to Kinder Morgan or who ever adopts climate damaging Tar Sands bitumen pipeline expansion is much broader than before. Here is a partial list:

- The Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish nations, whose territories the pipeline would terminate on, are leading organizing on Burnaby Mountain.
- The 200 people arrested are from a diverse cross-section of people. There have even been specific actions organized by youth, elders, religious leaders and artists.
- Two Members of Parliament, Elizabeth May and Kennedy Stewart, were both arrested for defying the injunction.
- The Burnaby Deputy Fire Chief has released a damning report on the safety concerns of the Kinder Morgan tank farm expansion, "We don't believe they have any firefighting capabilities. When I asked specifically for the details on the storage tanks and written protocols for how they plan the fire protection for the storage tanks, I was told by Kinder Morgan that they have none."
- The BC Teachers Federation passed a resolution to, "encourage all locals to stand in solidarity with Indigenous water and land protectors in opposition to the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion by lobbying their local politicians and by participating in any protests or actions."

This is just a small cross-section of who has been involved. It is now impossible to ignore their resolve and commitment. 2000 people showed up at a spontaneous protest in Vancouver less than 12 hours after hearing Morneau's announcement to buy KM's 65 year old pipeline, and actions are happening daily to stop the project.

Who Are the Extremists?

Is it so extreme to demand that a government follow through on its promises to prioritize the environment and respect the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People? To demand that government represents the interests of Canadian people above billion-dollar foreign oil corporations? To point out the failures of the "market" where the corporations need billions of our tax dollars to stay afloat? How extreme is it to point out that human beings have developed technologically and socially to a point where we don't need to destroy the environment, don't need to accept poverty and don't need to bow down to predatory capital development?

The real extremists are Kinder Morgan, Prime Minister Trudeau, Bill Morneau, Canadian Infrastructure Bank (CIB), Export Development Bank, and those in positions of power who are trying to force environmental, social and political degradation. The opposition to the Kinder Morgan pipeline and PM Trudeau's Bailout is strong. The battle is on. The pipeline expansion will not be built, and we will unite to protect our cities, coast and climate. Soil, not oil, is the future of humanity. When the people lead, the politicians will follow. 

This article was distilled from the original titled **Kinder Morgan: Billionaires, Blackmail & Bailouts Versus the "Ninjas of Eco-Terrorism"** that appeared in the **Fire This Time** Newspaper (www.firethistime.net)
Twitter: @thomasdavies59

... *Trudeau's lies* from pg. 3

Network on Economics and Trade (INET)
<https://tinyurl.com/ya23uptw>

Big Bank Bails

HSBC is Europe's biggest bank and one of the ten largest banks in the world. On April 21, 2018 it announced that it will no longer fund oil or gas projects in the Arctic, Alberta tar sands projects, and most coal projects.

This decision signals to Justin Trudeau that the era of fossil fuels is coming to a close.

Daniel Klier, global head of sustainable finance at HSBC, said that the bank recognizes "the need to reduce emissions rapidly to achieve the target set in the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit global temperatures rises to well below 2°C and our responsibility to support the communities in which we operate."

Formerly, HSBC was one of the heaviest investors in fossil fuels. A report, entitled "Banking on Climate Change", endorsed by dozens of environmental groups, ranked HSBC the seventh worst in the world for the financing of "extreme fossil fuels." It also found that from 2016 to 2017, "Even as the impacts of climate change become increasingly apparent", it made a \$2.6 billion increase in such financing.

Keith Stewart, senior energy strategist at Greenpeace Canada, advised Trudeau, who is about to invest taxpayers' dollars to make sure the Kinder Morgan pipeline gets built, to take warning in HSBC's shift.

"Before deciding to write a cheque to Kinder Morgan, Justin Trudeau should ask himself if he wants to rush in where HSBC fears to tread," said Stewart.

Myth vs Truth

Myth - If we could get the Alberta bitumen to Asia, it would fetch a much higher price than it currently does in the U.S.

Truth - Alberta bitumen is already getting the best possible price through existing pipelines to the US, which access the largest heavy oil refineries in the world. Few refineries in Asia currently can refine it. No tankers of Alberta bitumen went to Asia from Westridge terminal in 2017.

Myth - There is widespread support of First Nations along the route for the KM pipeline project.

Truth - Fewer than 1/3 of the First Nations along the pipeline and tanker route have signed Mutual Benefit Agreements (MBAs) or a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOUs) which basically state that a First Nation, Community, college or university will receive money from the pipeline corporation ... but only if the pipeline gets built. This has been bragged about as an endorsement by the pipeline promoters. Support seems to be waning. The company boasts of having 43 agreements. A year ago it was

reported there were 51. More significantly, the Tsleil-Waututh, in whose territory Kinder Morgan's Westridge terminal is located, and the Secwepemc whose territories encompass more than half the pipeline's length, are adamantly opposed.

Myth – Bitumen sinks in fresh water but not in salt water.

Truth – Bitumen sinks (and stinks) when toxic diluents evaporate in both fresh and salt waters. Sinking happens fast when bitumen comes in contact with sediments. Sediments are abundant in the Fraser River's brown coloured outflow around Vancouver and into the Salish Sea.

Myth – A world-class spill response team can clean up most of the oil in an oil spill.

Truth – A recovery of 10 - 20% of the oil is considered a good clean up job by industry and government. 80% or more cannot be recovered. It disperses and pollutes the beaches, intertidal zones and ocean bottom for decades. Other difficulties make land based spills, except the smallest, impossible to completely clean up.

Myth - The Alberta oil patch drives the Canadian economy.

Truth - The Alberta oil patch generates only 2% of Canada's GDP.

A Twisted "Carbon Tax"

If diluted bitumen starts flowing down the x-KM new pipeline, gas prices at the pumps in B.C. will go up. No lie.


They figured out a clever way to fund their new pipeline. Make British Columbians pay for it.

Here's how it was supposed to work. Kinder Morgan got the National Energy Board (NEB) to approve an increase in toll rates of \$5 a barrel on all refined products pumped down the old KM pipeline after the new pipeline is completed and in operation.

This little reported NEB decision will more than double the charge KM now levies to deliver a barrel of gasoline or diesel to B.C.

One economist has calculated that it would have delivered enough extra revenue to KM over the 35 year life of the pipeline to pay for the whole expansion project and would cost B.C. motorists 10 to 15 cents more per litre of gas.

Another little-known fact. The new pipeline will be exclusively dedicated to transporting unrefined bitumen for export. B.C. gets no benefits, except for 50 more long-term jobs (an estimate provided by Kinder Morgan to the NEB during the hearings) after it is built.

When a prominent pipeline supporter discovered this, nearly speechless, he muttered "Well, I've been duped!" and instantly became a pipeline opponent. 

First published in Action In Time and e-version at actionintime.ca



Medication civil disobedience

One of the first duties of the physician is to educate the masses not to take medicine. – Dr. William Osler

You may have heard about Stanley Milgram, the American psychologist who carried out some of the most infamous research on obedience back in the 1960s, but have you heard of the psychiatrist Charles K. Hofling?

Hofling carried out a very interesting hospital-based experiment in 1966, in which hospital nurses were given orders by an unknown doctor to administer a potentially life-threatening dose of a drug to a particular patient.

The fake doctor phoned the nurse on night duty and told her to administer 20 mg of “Astroten” – a fake drug – to a patient, promising he would drop by later for the required signature. A bottle of “Astroten” was in the drug cabinet with its label clearly stating that 10 mg was the maximum daily dose.

The result? Twenty-one out of the 22 nurses were prepared to give the patient the Astroten as ordered and actually had to be prevented from doing so during the experiment. Like Milgram’s experiments, Hofling showed that even when people have strong reasons to question author-

ity – such as being asked to deliver a potentially lethal drug– they often won’t question the orders they received. You likely wouldn’t get the same result today, but undoubtedly one stark fact remains: the authority of doctors or specialists over nurses and patients can seem invincible.

While Milgram and Hofling’s experiments have been criticized for cruelly tricking people into following orders, they are incredibly insightful, showing that many of us are hard-wired to *not* question or disobey authority. After all, “just following orders” is the oldest excuse in the world to explain away bad behaviour, even that of Nazis and those who carried out atrocities on an industrial scale.

In the modern world of pharmaceutical consumption, complying with authority – following a doctor’s prescription, for example – is considered one of the highest duties of a patient. Despite all the new-age assurances around “informed consent” and “doctor-patient collaboration,” we still live in a world where expecting and rewarding obedience endure and thrive.

Patients who are ‘non-adherent’ to their doctors’ orders do so at the risk of souring their good relationship with their GPs. Healthcare professionals understandably expect compliance from patients because they believe that not listening to good medical advice

could be risky. Yet in the prescribing world, how big and how bad is this problem?

“Medication non-adherence is truly an epidemic,” according to Mary De Vera, a pharmacoepidemiologist and assistant professor in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at UBC. She was awarded a university position funded by AbbVie, a major pharmaceutical company.

Just following orders” is the oldest excuse in the world to explain away bad behaviour, even that of Nazis and those who carried out atrocities...

The “Professorship in Medication Adherence” focuses on, as far as I can tell, the problem of disobedient patients; this is a head scratcher worthy of being filed in the “truth is stranger than fiction” file. What’s clear to me is that Big Pharma’s business model depends on drug sales so they must do their best to squash disobedience. After all, disobedient patients who won’t buy their products are bad for business.

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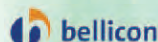
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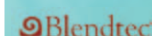
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There are certainly times when refusing a prescription may be fatal – getting bitten by a poisonous snake and refusing the antidote or having an asthma attack and refusing a bronchodilator, for example – but the vast majority of prescription drugs don't fall into that category.

Clearly, not adhering to your doctor's script is wasteful from an economic point of view. As a patient, if you get a prescription from your doctor, pay for it, but then don't take it, you're wasting your doctor's time and the drug insurer's and your money. You might also be missing out on something that works to deal with your health complaint.

Dr. De Vera maintains that “non-adherence is a leading cause of preventable morbidity, mortality and cost,” but I would beg to differ. As Peter Gotzsche so colourfully outlines in his book *Deadly Medicines and Organized Crime*, prescription drugs are the third leading cause of death so how could refusing prescribed drugs be a leading cause of dying or getting sick?

But that's the line the drug industry and its surrogates like to peddle. One of my colleagues has a good counter to this. He pointed to the arthritis drug Vioxx – likely 150,000 dead after three years on the market – and said, “Nobody died by not taking Vioxx.” How true. Now substitute Prepulsid, Bextra, Baycol, Rezulin (etc.) and dozens of pharmaceuticals removed from the market because of their propensity to kill and this ‘medication non-adherence’ crusade seems almost preposterous.


The theme of “non-adherence” isn't a sentiment that would sit well with the doctors I know because they've been raised drinking a different Kool-Aid where “shared decision making” rules. Instead of ‘non-adherence,’ progressive doctors are now talking about “minimally disruptive medicine” and ways to rationalize and reduce peoples' prescription regimes because they are aware of one indisputable fact: more drugs often lead to more harm.

I looked for research to see if it was harmful to patients if they did not adhere to their prescriptions, but there is very little information available. A past systematic review by the Cochrane Collaboration found that, even though only about half of all patients take their medication as prescribed, there was scant evidence to show that this made much of a difference. Only five of 180 studies on how to improve “adherence rates” could show any improvements in health outcomes for patients. As the authors noted, “Even the most effective interventions did not lead to large improvements in adherence and treatment outcomes.”

While it seems the pharmaceutical industry's “take-your-meds” approach is working under the 1950s banner of “Father knows best,” a noticeable counter-movement called “de-prescribing” is starting to emerge. Because the problem of excessive medication use in the elderly is becoming more and more known, efforts to ‘deprescribe’ – especially among the overdrugged and frail elderly – are expanding. New educational programs and tools are springing up all over the place to help doctors recognize and act on the problems related to polypharmacy (multiple drug prescriptions) and to try and reduce the potential harm related to all those drugs.

Doctors are starting to recognize that the more drugs you take, the more problems such as drug-to-drug interactions, errors and serious adverse drug reactions you are likely to have. This means – especially in older people – more falls, confusion, delirium and otherwise feeling sicker. One of the biggest reasons many seniors end up in hospitals – and have prolonged stays there – is that they have actually taken the dozens of drugs as prescribed, probably from multiple doctors. As foolish and as crazy as it sounds, many of those drugs were given to deal with the side effects of drugs the patient is already taking!

Even though doctors are starting to work to reduce the risk of polypharmacy, we can all be involved. Here's one suggestion for seniors and those who care for them. Try taking this line for a test-drive: “Doctor, I don't want to take all these drugs because they make me feel bad – weak, dizzy, confused, restless, etc. Can you do a trial on me and cut out those drugs that are not essential to keep me alive or which control my symptoms? Can you help me do this?”

No reasonable doctor will refuse this request, if you ask nicely. This is not being disobedient to your doctor's orders. It's not about being “non adherent.” It's about reminding yourself that sometimes you have to be the first one to say, “enough is enough.” 

Alan Cassels is the author of numerous books, including *The ABCs of Disease Mongering*, *The Cochrane Collaboration*, *Selling Sickness* and *Seeking Sickness*.

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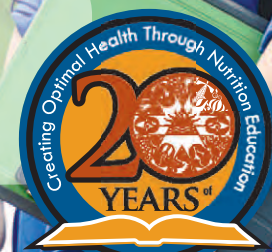
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Why go more plant-based?

A half century ago, vegetarian and vegan diets were viewed with concern by health professionals. In decades since, these have been the focus of vast amounts of research. Today, a dietary shift in the direction of plant foods is regarded as a very positive step by knowledgeable dietitians, MDs, nutritional scientists and by a growing number of the general public. Why the shift?

Reduced risk of chronic disease: Two areas of well-designed research centred on health conscious individuals with different dietary patterns, all of whom were in good health at the beginning of the study and who were followed for many years, are shown below. In North America, the Adventist Health Study-2 (AHS-2) included 96,000 participants. In the UK, the EPIC-Oxford study included 65,000 participants. Compared with health-conscious non-vegetarians (some of whom had meat as little as once a week), below are the rates of disease of a) those who included dairy (lacto) and eggs (ovo) but no flesh foods, and b) vegans who consumed no animal products.


	Health-conscious lacto-ovo-vegetarians	Health-conscious vegans	Study
Mortality	9% lower	15% lower	AHS-2
Cardiovascular disease	23% lower	42% lower	AHS-2
Hypertension	55% lower	75% lower	AHS-2
Type 2 diabetes	38% lower	62% lower	AHS-2
Cancer	11% / 8% lower	16% / 19% lower	EPIC-Oxford/ AHS-2
Cataracts	30% lower	40% lower	EPIC-Oxford
Diverticular disease	27% lower	72% lower	EPIC-Oxford
Kidney disease	52% lower	52% lower	AHS-2

Healthful foods: Plant foods are concentrated sources of fibre, powerfully protective phytochemicals, antioxidants and anti-inflammatory compounds consistently linked with favourable health outcomes. Plants provide all the protein, minerals, essential fats and carbohydrates that fuel our brain. The plant world gives us every nutrient we need apart from B12, which always originates from bacteria in anyone's diet.

When we leave out meat, we eliminate Neu5Gc (linked with cancer) pro-oxidants such as heme iron. We reduce our intake of saturated fat and avoid the carnitine that is transformed into trimethylamine N-oxide (TMAO), in both cases reducing our risk of cardiovascular disease.

Care about the environment: Until fairly recently, those who viewed themselves as environmentalists entirely ignored the even more potentially effective action of shifting their own dietary choice. However, since the UN's Environment Programme's (UNEP) international panel of sustainable resource management and the National Academy of Sciences recommended a global shift to a plant-based diet, many are taking notice *and* action.

Compassion for animals: Most people would not stand for a dog or beautiful wild bird being abused. Yet pigs (smarter than dogs) and chickens (even "free-range") lead lives that would outrage many. By becoming vegetarian, we stop supporting the use of animals as food.

Going plant-based is economical and even delicious: Whether you choose meat-free Mondays or are entirely plant-based all week, you can save some serious cash. Granted, there is a bit of an adjustment time and one needs to explore new sections of the supermarket, learn a few kitchen skills and seek out different restaurants. But because vegan food preparation is a peak interest for many chefs and very tasty plant-based protein sources have been developed, making a change is an inviting adventure. Check out www.meetup.com/MeatlessMeetup and www.happycow.net and have fun with it! 

Vesanto Melina is a Vancouver dietitian. www.nutrispeak.com, www.becomingvegan.ca, 778-379-5377.

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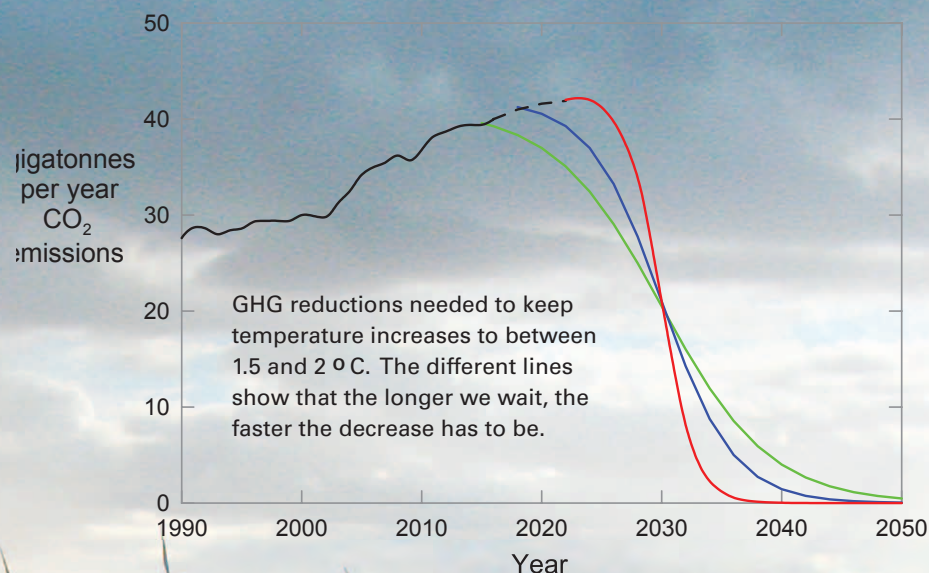
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Urgent and practical climate action

Climate change is re-focusing the duty of professional engineers and geoscientists

by Bruce Mason



It is the fundamental duty of engineers and geoscientists to refuse to work on all new fossil-fuel infrastructure. That is the dire warning of two well-known local engineers. In order to save life on the planet, they are calling for a drastic change in the nature of their professions, a return to the expressed basic mandate, to lead the way to essential, innovative design and sustainable infrastructure.

"We must stop throwing more fossil fuels onto the fire causing global warming. We need to treat this as an unprecedented emergency, a crime against humanity," write David Huntley and Romilly Cavanaugh, who are expressing their concern through *Common Ground*. Huntley is Professor Emeritus, Physics, at Simon Fraser University, and holds two engineering degrees and Cavanaugh is the Professional Engineer who was recently arrested for protesting the dangerous expansion of Kinder Morgan Canada's pipeline system, which is being hotly debated in Canada and has drawn widespread media attention. Cavanaugh previously worked on that pipeline system when it was owned by Trans Mountain Pipeline.

They report that protecting public safety and the planet is clearly mandated in the codes of the professional organizations. The code of ethics of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (ifc.org) states, "The consulting engineer shall seek solutions that are compatible with the principles of sustainable development." Engineers and Geoscientists BC, the association that governs the practice of these two professions, has a code of ethics stating that its members and licensees shall "hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public, the protection of the environment, and promote health and safety within the workplace."

In Alberta, which is the source of toxic diluted bitu-

men transported through the pipeline, the Professional Engineers and Geoscientists Guideline for Ethical Practice states, "Professional engineers and geoscientists shall, in their areas of practice, hold paramount the health, safety and welfare of the public and have regard for the environment."



Canada is rich in renewable energy sources including wind, geothermal and solar. We can make the switch to a clean and green future and can have a stronger economy and healthier society for it.

Huntley and Cavanaugh note, "Taken at face value, the above codes of ethics mean that none of these professionals should engage themselves in the design or construction of any new fossil-fuel infrastructure, but rather attention and effect should be put into developing renewable and sustainable energy resources.

"There has been a great deal of media coverage recently both for and against the planned Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. Much of it is political, but of utmost importance are the ramifications for the planet. Justin Trudeau has stated that the expansion approval was based on science and he is convinced of the project's safety and

necessity, but the pipeline is neither necessary nor safe for the people of Canada and for the planet."

"It is now well established that the use of fossil fuels is causing a climate crisis for the planet as a result of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. The effects on the safety, health and welfare of the public are well known and are the worst for those in the countries that have contributed the least amount of greenhouse gases. That in itself is a social justice issue. Wealthy industrialized countries, like Canada, have created the climate crisis that we all now face, but developing countries will be hit the hardest by it. If Canada turns its back on the poorest nations, it will be a moral failure on our part."

Huntley also spells out facts that must be clearly understood and immediately acted upon by everyone: "It is essential to understand that the problems caused by climate changes will not stop with cessation of greenhouse gas emissions. What has been emitted up to the present will continue to cause additional global warming for decades, even centuries; we can expect that even if there are zero further emissions, the temperature rise above pre-industrial times will be 1.4 °C. In order to limit the temperature rise to 2 °C and avoid the most catastrophic consequences from climate change, it is necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 % by 2030 (see the accompanying chart). Canada's target is only a 30 % decrease and there is no credible plan for even that. This is despite Canada's commitment to the Paris agreement to keep the temperature rise to under 2 °C.

"Engineers always consider risks in their analyses. They do not design a bridge that has even a one percent probability of failing in its design lifetime. They should not be designing or building infrastructures that risk taking the planet into a runaway climate

continued p.16...

Democracy versus party discipline

The 2014 *Reform Act* was an important first step toward restoring representative government

by Kennedy Stewart

The Crushing Power of Canadian Political Parties

Canadian political parties have more control over our politics than parties in any other democratic country. Many observers of Canadian politics agree, including Dr. Leslie Seidle of the Institute for Research on Public Policy, who states, “In the advanced parliamentary democracies, there is nowhere that has heavier, tighter party discipline than the Canadian House of Commons. Indeed, individual Canadian members of Parliament are almost completely constrained from taking action outside what is determined by the leadership team of their political party.



Question Period really only reveals which ordinary MPs are better or worse at parroting the party line.

It is worth unpacking the idea of control to show what MPs are up against. There are two important aspects of control to consider: who controls the House of Commons’ *agenda* and who controls how MPs *vote*. Agenda control is most important, as it allows parties to determine which issues are and are not discussed in the House. Government and opposition parties wrestle to dominate what is discussed on any given day in the House of Commons, but at the same time MPs struggle within their own parties to determine what issues the party leadership will champion or bury in deep, dark holes. Parties also desperately try to control how MPs vote—to ensure all MPs vote with the party leader on all issues.

Party leadership teams use “party discipline” to exert control when setting agendas or votes. Disagree with the leadership team before an election and you will not be recruited or selected as a candidate. Take a contrary position during an election and you risk being dropped as a candidate. Speak out or vote against your party in the House of Commons and you’ll be demoted in, or expelled from, the cabinet or shadow cabinet. Or maybe the party leadership team will ban you from asking questions in the House for six months or remove you from your favourite committee. Go too far and you’ll get kicked out of the party caucus. MPs who find themselves even slightly offside with the party leadership team have very little

opportunity to contribute to shaping the country, as almost all aspects of what happens in the Chamber are controlled by a small group surrounding the party leader, including the leader’s principal secretary, the House leader, the whip, the national caucus chair and the leader’s office’s senior staff.

This was not always the case. Our politics were much different in the past. In fact, I doubt whether people today would recognize the House of Commons in the years following Confederation. For the first half-century of our parliamentary history, MPs would often vote with the party leader who promised them the most for their riding, regardless of which party they ran with during elections. Party lines were loose. According to Frank Underhill, “both front-benchers and backbenchers passed with remarkable ease from one political camp to another. In terms of setting the agenda, House business was more or less evenly split between private members and government, giving ordinary MPs more control of which issues were debated and voted upon on the floor of the House of Commons. In addition, while party leaders did what they could to convince—some would say bribe—MPs to vote with their party, this was far from guaranteed. As a result, government bills would often fail to pass, and party leaders would have to listen to the opinions of a wide array of MPs when changing laws or spending public money.

The power of individual MPs started to diminish during the early twentieth century as party leadership teams began to impose their wills in Parliament. Godbout and Høyland’s exhaustive study of early voting in the House of Commons shows successive Liberal and Conservative governments decreased the amount of House time dedicated to private members’ business and increased the time spent on government business. The less time spent on private members’ business, the fewer opportunities for ordinary MPs to forward the concerns of their constituents.

Ordinary MPs started to resent their ebbing power to set the agenda, but their options to fight back were limited. As there were only two parties in the House of Commons—Liberals and Conservatives—even crossing the floor would not provide MPs with more time to talk about issues in their ridings, as the leadership teams of both parties worked to control the parliamentary agenda. As a result, frustrated MPs began to leave the two old parties to start new political parties such as the Progressive Party of Canada, formed in 1920, and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), formed in 1932. Ironically, as the number of parties represented in the House of Commons increased, so

too did party discipline within *all* parties. As a result, while political candidates now have a larger array of political parties to join, they must now be ultra-loyal to whichever party team they end up standing with in order to keep their job.

The activities taking place during a typical day in the House of Commons illuminate this shift in priorities and opportunities. On most days, work officially starts with ministers tabling government bills or making statements. This is followed by a period in which ordinary MPs present private member’s bills or motions and petitions (including, now, e-petitions). After government bill debate, the agenda shifts to MP statements and Question Period before moving back to discussing government bills. The day finishes with private members’ business debates and starts all over again the next day, more or less following the same routine.

Activities Where Party Leadership Teams Exert Full Agenda Control

On a typical day, MPs spend eight-and-a-half hours (510 minutes) debating the nation’s business. Of this, over six hours (72%) of the agenda is directly controlled by the government leadership team, which oversees all aspects of government business including speech content. This holds for the opposition side of the House as well, where leadership teams decide who speaks and, for the most part, what is said in response to government initiatives.



The power of ordinary MPs has greatly diminished over the years as party leadership teams ... exert more central party control over the parliamentary agenda.


Although the event attracts the most attention from the media and public hoping to see brilliance or MPs falling flat on their face, party leadership teams absolutely dominate what is said in the House of Commons during Question Period. The agenda of the forty-five minutes allotted to Question Period—9 percent of a typical day in the House—is mainly controlled by opposition party leadership teams that decide what questions will be asked, but also by the

government leadership team, which decides what answers are given. Question Period really only reveals which ordinary MPs are better or worse at parroting the party line.

What Needs to Change?

One way to lessen party control would be to allocate more time for private members' business, which has shrunk to a mere 4 percent of time spent in the House of Commons. This time should be increased so at the very least every backbench MP has the opportunity to have an idea voted upon—or even better, every backbench MP has the opportunity to trigger votes on two bills or motions. Although this change would cut into the time for debating government bills, the result would better empower ordinary MPs.

While increasing the time spent on private members' business would give backbench MPs more airtime, it would do little to fix the smothering party discipline. Unleashing backbenchers requires weakening the grip of party leadership teams. Michael Chong's *Reform Act* was an important first step in further empowering ordinary MPs. For one, its clauses can give MPs, not the party leader, final say over who sits in the party caucus and stops party leaders from unilaterally kicking MPs out of the party. Second, it gives MPs the power to trigger a leadership review vote to remove an overly controlling party leader. Finally, it removes the ability of party leaders to block candidates from running for their party. While Chong beat the odds and succeeded in getting his private member's bill passed into law, the parties have not fully embraced these changes, and things remain much as they were. If this does not change in future Parliaments, revisiting the *Reform Act* would seem a very good idea.

The power of ordinary MPs has greatly diminished over the years as party leadership teams have reduced the time allocated to private members' business in order to exert more central party control over the parliamentary agenda. It has become difficult for backbenchers to control even a small fraction of the agenda and contribute to making Canada a more democratic and better place to live. 

Excerpted from book titled **Turning Parliament Inside Out, Practical Ideas for Reforming Canada's Democracy** edited by Michael Chong, Scott Simms, and Kennedy Stewart with forewords by Ed Broadbent, Preston Manning and Bob Rae, published by Douglas & McIntyre 2017, www.douglas-mcintyre.com Above text is from Chapter 3, Empowering the Backbench written by Kennedy Stewart, MP. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

Canada Infrastructure Bank a Trojan Horse

by Joyce Nelson

World's Biggest Investor

According to *The Economist* (Dec. 7, 2013), this company (that nobody has heard of) turns out to be the world's biggest investor, with more than \$4 trillion in assets under management, and another \$15 trillion that it manages (under something called the Aladdin risk-management platform) for investors worldwide.

So influential is BlackRock that, according to *The Economist*, the company advised governments in the U.S., Greece and Britain on what to do with toxic assets from crashing banks, with co-founder, chair and CEO Larry Fink becoming a Washington insider.

These governments sought Fink's advice, despite the fact that (as *Fortune* reported in 2008) BlackRock's Larry Fink "was an early and vigorous promoter [of] the same mortgage-backed securities" responsible for the crisis. "Now his firm is making millions cleaning up these toxic assets," *Fortune* noted.

Besides being Bank of America's biggest shareholder, BlackRock owns part of Merrill Lynch and in 2009 BlackRock snapped up Barclays' asset-management business, thereby boosting the assets under its control well into the trillions.

The current Board of Directors for BlackRock (blackrock.com) has some interesting people and corporate connections, including one Canadian – Gordon Nixon, the former President and CEO of the Royal Bank of Canada who retired in 2014 and was appointed to the BlackRock Board in July 2015.

In its extensive 2013 coverage of BlackRock, *The Economist* focused on the company's risk-management platform called Aladdin – a massive data centre that "single-handedly manages almost as much money as all the world's private equity and hedge funds," while advising more than 100 major investors worldwide on where and how to invest. Calling Aladdin's "prognostications" somewhat "discomfiting," *The Economist* noted: "Buyers, sellers and regulators may all be relying on the same assumptions, simply because they are all consulting Aladdin. In a panic, this could increase the risk of all of them wanting to jump the same way, making things worse."

With BlackRock advising on \$15 trillion worth of investments globally, it wasn't just *The Economist* that was worried. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported, the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Financial Research issued a 2013 report which "concluded that asset-management firms [like BlackRock] and the funds they run were 'vulnerable to shocks' and may engage in 'herding' behaviour that could amplify a shock to the financial system."

But BlackRock lobbied hard against such a view, and in April 2016 avoided greater oversight from regulators in the U.S.

Struggling Local Governments

Provinces and municipalities across Canada are struggling financially, as neoliberal federal governments since

the mid-1990s have cut transfer payments and further downloaded costs onto local governments (which have the least ability to raise revenues, basically through property taxes and user fees).

As Council of Canadians' Maude Barlow and Paul Moist (national president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees) wrote in 2012, "The federal strategy appears to be to starve municipalities of infrastructure cash until they are forced to privatize through a Public-Private Partnership (P3)," despite evidence "from auditors' general reports across Canada that P3s are often more costly and less efficient than fully public models."



As Council of Canadians' Maude Barlow and Paul Moist wrote in 2012, "The federal strategy appears to be to starve municipalities of infrastructure cash until they are forced to privatize through a Public-Private Partnership. "

In 2014, BC's Auditor General revealed that the provincial government is paying nearly twice as much to borrow through P3 private financing than if it borrowed the money itself. As CUPE noted, "Over the average 35 year lifespan of P3 contracts, this means the [BC] government is paying more than \$2 billion more just in private financing."

In December 2014, Ontario's Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk blasted the Liberals' use of private money to finance new hospitals and transit, revealing that Infrastructure Ontario's use of P3s had cost \$8 billion more taxpayer dollars than traditional public financing would have.

The use of P3s in the United Kingdom led to what has been called "a full-blown fiscal crisis," with governments indebted to banks and corporations for 222 billion pounds sterling in order to pay for P3 projects valued at 56.5 billion pounds – an astonishing rip-off of taxpayers. UK's "Private Finance Initiative," in place since the 1990s, was the forerunner to the Canadian P3 program, but no one bothered to explain to Canadians just what happened to the UK through its use of P3 private financing.

More recently, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk revealed Ontario's mismanagement of the electricity system through vastly overpaying IPPs (independent power producers). The Auditor General determined that because of the terms for this partial privatization of *continued p.21...*



Climate change drives disease-spreading arthropods

According to an African proverb (and the Dalai Lama), “If you think you’re too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a closed room with a mosquito.” The saying implies that, even when we feel insignificant and powerless, we can create a buzz. But mosquitoes and other tiny critters can literally have a huge impact.

An insect no bigger than a grain of rice, fortified by climate change, has devastated forests in British Columbia and beyond. Warmer winters have allowed the mountain pine beetle to move further north and survive and thrive in places where cold temperatures once halted their spread.

If swaths of red, dying forests weren’t enough to get us to take global warming seriously, other tiny critters might get our attention. Researchers have found that ticks, fleas and mosquitoes are moving into new territories, in part because of climate change.

That’s led to an uptick in diseases, according to a report by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It found vector-borne diseases spread by parasitic insects and arachnids more than tripled in the US over

12 years: from 27,388 cases in 2004 to 96,075 in 2016.

Experts say climate change is a factor. University of Toronto epidemiologist David Fisman told *E&E News* (republished in *Scientific American*) that black-legged ticks carrying Lyme disease, which can impair motor function and cause memory loss, even death, are showing up in parts of Canada where they haven’t been seen before.

In the past, “They just didn’t have the ability to establish local tick populations because it simply was too cold for them to complete their life cycles,” Fisman said.

A disease-carrying mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, is also expanding throughout the continental US and is now common in 38 states. Yet another arthropod, the lone star tick, causes a severe lifelong immune response to meat, called “alpha-gal allergy.” When a tick bites, it spreads the alpha-gal sugar molecule through its saliva into the human’s blood. As a *Grist* article explains, “Then, the molecule essentially rewires the body’s immune system, prompting it to produce an overload of alpha-gal antibodies.” The life-threatening reaction hits infected people several hours after they eat meat.

... [A]s an article in the *Lancet* says, “Under cur-

rent predictions of climate change, mosquitoes such as *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* are expected to increase in both distribution and ability to transmit diseases such as dengue, Zika, and yellow fever.” The *Lancet* article also says increasing cases of dengue and spread and intensity of cholera have been “directly linked to climate change.”

The most vulnerable are also at the most risk. A recent study by researchers at Memorial University published in *Pediatrics* found children bear 88 percent of the burden of climate-related disease, which “threatens to reverse the gains in global child health and the reductions in global child mortality made over the past 25 years.”

A mosquito whining while you’re trying to sleep is annoying. Parasite and disease proliferation that comes with accelerating global warming is a much bigger, collective problem that we must work together to resolve. ◀

Excerpted from the original article. **David Suzuki** is a scientist, broadcaster, author and co-founder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation senior editor Ian Hanington. www.davidsuzuki.org



Universe Within Gwen Randall-Young

PSYCHOLOGY

Pain as a teacher

Painful emotion is a teacher that bears the gift of self-knowledge – Paul Shapiro, M.D.

We all experience pain at some time in our lives and it may be physical or emotional pain. Sometimes, pain is transient, such as the pain of an immunization or a dental procedure.

However, many suffer from chronic pain that never goes away. Sadly, some physical conditions have no cure. It is something some people just have to live with.

Emotional pain can be considered chronic as well. A child with abusive parents may suffer for 18 years before getting out, but the pain from those experiences can last a lifetime. Some children are bullied and that can go on for years. Loss of a loved one can leave a painful sense of loss that never really goes away.

Emotional pain can be overcome depending on the type and severity. It feels so good when we no longer have the pain. The way we view our pain affects its intensity. If we are angry and bitter because we have chronic physical pain, that will make us feel even worse. If we hold resentment and vindictiveness over emotional pain others have

caused, it is like scratching a wound, preventing it from ever fully healing.

With physical pain, it helps if we show ourselves compassion and love. This is better than hating the pain. We can embrace it rather than rejecting it. If a child skins a knee, we don’t just kiss the knee. We embrace the whole child. Similarly, we can embrace our entirety, pain and all, and surround it with self-love.

We need to acknowledge the pain and send healing energy to the parts that hurt. Having done that, we can then put our focus elsewhere. Interestingly, often when I do hypnosis with a client who has a bad migraine, or a painful part on their body, when they come out of the trance they say the pain is gone. Pain relief was not the focus of the hypnosis. However, as the body relaxes and the mind becomes quiet, the pain dissipates.

You know the philosophical question, “If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?” Similarly, we may wonder if we remove our focus from the pain, will we still experience it? This applies equally to emotional pain.

The other important point is that pain can be a powerful teacher. In my 20s, when I entered the work world,

I found that the people who had the most depth and wisdom seemed to be the ones who had experienced suffering.

Challenging our pain can be like climbing Mount Everest. Like moving up the mountain, we can move forward in a positive direction and grow in ways we never could without our painful experiences.

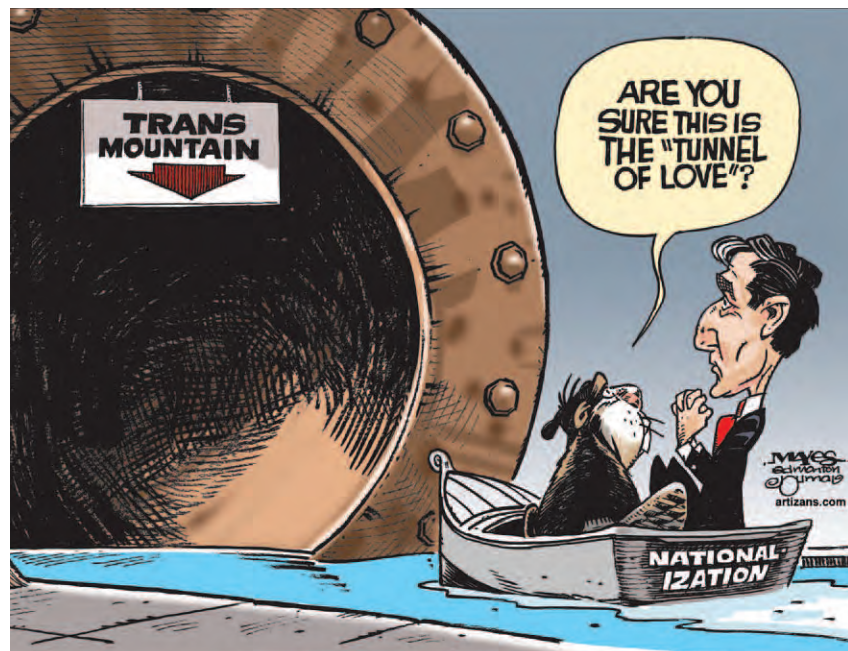
Pain can be a catalyst to help us develop compassion, perspective and wisdom. It can make us stronger. Pain should not define us. We are so much more than our pain. Pain definitely has side effects in our lives and affects our view of ourselves. However, unless we move on from these, we will remain stuck as victims of what we have endured. And we will carry that pain wherever we go.

The process of moving on from the pain reveals a deep inner strength and that strength will make all the difference throughout the rest of our lives. ◀

Gwen Randall-Young is a psychotherapist. To read more articles or to order her books, “Deep Powerful Change” hypnosis MP3s, or MP3s for Creating Effective Relationships, visit www.gwen.ca or visit her Facebook inspirational page. View Gwen’s videos on YouTube.

Tell me lies, lies, crude little lies

by Eoin Finn



In the wake of the Federal Government's phenomenal decision this week to purchase a 65-year-old leaky oil pipeline and the unbuilt TMX project, it is worth examining the truthfulness of the arguments made to justify it. The arguments, parroted endlessly by Liberal spin-doctors and mainstream media, include:

Lie: Expanding oil and gas pipelines is consistent with meeting climate targets: Of all the assertions, this is by far the most questionable. Many people find it deeply insulting to their intelligence. This Government, elected on a promise to curb carbon emissions, has approved 3 oil pipelines, a dozen LNG plants and a plethora of coal shipments, all of which runs counter to any discernible plan, other than an anemic carbon tax proposal, to curb emissions. Failure to take any action against the fossil-fuel industry – the source of at least half of our emissions – is more reminiscent of the Harper era than the “real change” and reduced oil subsidies we were promised.

Lie: Getting Kinder Morgan's TMX built is “in the national interest”: Serving Canadians better is certainly “in the national interest”. To argue that bailing out a dodgy Texan oilco with \$4.5 Billion of Canadian taxpayer dollars outranks getting affordable housing built, educating our workers for industries of the future, improving access to

health care and getting clean water to First Nations reserves shows a profound misconception of the concept of “national interest”.

Lie: We are missing out on getting a higher price in Asia for our oil: This is not, nor has it ever been, a provable assertion. Instead, the evidence shows that heavy oils like Alberta's tarry goop sell for a discount from U.S. prices in Asia. Small wonder then that none of the oil from the existing pipeline goes to Asia – the tankers all turn South to the U.S. That's odd – surely some would go to Asia if there were a better price to be had there.

Lie: The project will generate 15,000 good, middle-class jobs: Wish that it were so! Unfortunately, Kinder Morgan's own figures show only 52 long-term jobs in BC associated with the TMX project- running the expanded Burnaby tank farm, the terminal and maintaining the pipeline. There are more employees in an average tourist hotel. All others – digging and laying the pipeline, feeding and housing the workers - would be temporary workers during the 2-year construction period. And there are dozens of hungry pipe-laying crews in Texas and Oklahoma all geared to fill those construction jobs.

Lie: We have no more important relationship than that with First Nations: Mouthing frothy apologies for 151 years of cruel mistreatment and

promising to ratify UNDRIP (the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), doesn't cut the mustard with First Nations. They know that old colonial attitudes remain deeply embedded in the loathsome Indian Act. Offering them a way out of grinding poverty if only they will agree to a dangerous pipeline serving a sunset industry – shameful!


Lie: The Ocean Protection Plan will protect against oil spills on the coast: The Feds say that “their” science says diluted bitumen floats (so no need to worry). It didn't in the 2010 Michigan spill. Eight years later, bitumen is still being scraped off the bottom of the Kalamazoo River. And, even if it did float, at best 10-20% of the spill will be recovered. The rest of it will end up on the riverbed or ocean floor or wash up as tar-balls on our beaches. The bottom line is that all of the \$1.5 Billion of vaguely defined Oceans Protection Plan won't make dilbit float.

Lie: There are investors lined up to take this off the Government's hands: Alas- no. Neither Enbridge (trying to reduce debt on its books) nor TransCanada (busy with Keystone XL) showed the slightest interest in taking on this deadbeat project. Some pension funds showed vague interest as investors, but

their pipeline know-how ranks below even that of the Federal Government. It is likely that taxpayers will be stuck with this for a long time. That is odd – didn't the West react unpleasantly the last time a Trudeau wanted to nationalize Alberta's oil industry?

Lie: Kinder Morgan has spill insurance: Well- not really! As economist and former ICBC CEO Robyn Allan explained, Kinder Morgan (U.S.) balked at the NEB's insistence that it set aside a hefty insurance fund for spills. The Federal Government – yes, the same Feds/politicians that paid billions of public money to settle the Nathan E Stewart, Marathassa, Mount Polley and Lac Megantic disasters - have now stepped in to put taxpayers on the hook for spills from TMX's pipelines and tankers.

Abraham Lincoln famously said “You can fool all the people some of the time, some of the people all of the time, but never all the people all of the time”.

Face it – TMX is an economic basket-case. 

Eoin Finn B.Sc., Ph.D., MBA, is a resident of Vancouver and a retired Partner of Accounting/Consulting firm KPMG. After 35 years in the business world, he describes himself as an “accidental activist”.





Paul Pigat – the fire behind Blue Smoke

In a dizzying array of diverse roles, Paul Pigat is a leading player in our region's music. The guitar wiz is also generating an international buzz with music he is uniquely covering and creating.

"If I had a chance to play everything I like, I'd be playing in 50 different bands," he says. "In fact, I'm not even certain what 'my music' is anymore; starting off as a metal-head, becoming a bluesman, going to school to study classical music, touring Top-40 country, working on jazz, while making my living in rockabilly."

Long before establishing Vancouver as home base, Pigat began picking his way to legendary status in the wide world of guitar, gigging professionally at age 12 or 13 in bars around Toronto. Decades later, his most recent musical project, *Blue Smoke: The Music of Merle Travis*, showcases why he is earning so much international respect and popularity. His tribute to the influential finger-style master/originator is jam-packed with virtuosity, pop history, originality and – are you ready for it? – humour.

Blue Smoke is much more than a mirror; it's more like a bonfire to shed some light and inspiration, warm your heart and put a smile on your face.

"Anyone who has ever tried to fingerpick a guitar owes something to him," Pigat says, explaining the commonly used term 'Travis style' guitar, in which the thumb plays bass notes, while fingers (in Travis' case, one finger) pick the melody. In the hands of a master, the ubiquitous instrument is transformed into a little orchestra.

But as Pigat notes, "Almost everything sounds better in a band." In this case: one of his many musical incarnations, Cousin Harley, widely regarded among this planet's premier rockabilly groups, with the inimitable Keith Picot on stand-up bass and equally outstanding Jesse Cahill on drums. The flame and much of the heat in *Blue Smoke* is classic signature Travis licks and songs,



the sum of which is ignited and made greater by Pigat's well-established versatility and fiery imagination.

"Merle created guitar playing resembling stride piano with its 'om-pah' bass and a counter melody. What's unique in Travis Picking – think of anyone else who has a whole style of guitar playing named after them – is synopated melody. Not just blues, jazz or country, but all of them, and more, along with a dictionary of unique chords, including some which are near impossible. I've been covering his tunes for years and the man could write some seriously funny songs. Any time I play them, I'm happy."

Merle's swinging finger-style playing, driving back-beat and wry sense of humour are integral to the increasingly globally popular rockabilly trio, but Pigat explains, "We've taken some liberties and added a bit of our trademark flair to the original recordings, but our goal was to pay homage and respect to this inspirational American music icon. Why mess with the best?"

The idea of a tribute record had been on Pigat's encyclo-

pedic mind, but the 100th anniversary of Merle's birth in 2017 made it more powerful. So did the enthusiastic support and sponsorship of Gretsch Guitars, which Pigat is closely associated with, now owner of Bigsby, which originally custom-built Merle's axe.

Blue Smoke is comprised of lingering classic hits such as *16 Tons* and *Dark as a Dungeon*, mixed up with lesser known Travis material, some of which is now politically incorrect. Lighting up Merle's legacy it's supplemented with Pigat's innovative personal touches and an original, *Rosewood*, named for the guitar pioneer's birthplace in Kentucky.

To paraphrase Chet Atkins, a Travis practitioner who became better-known than his mentor, during a visit with Merle, he could write you a hit song and sing it, tell you what was wrong with your mule, draw you a cartoon, fix

your watch and show you some great solos and licks.

Undoubtedly there will be a nod to, and touch of, Merle Travis in all of Pigat's eagerly awaited inventions and incarnations, as there is in so much modern music. But right now, that's on record and Paul has transcribed every note while on bullet trains touring China. It will be available at paulpigat.com, along with his fast growing, diverse discography.

Blue Smoke is much more than a mirror; it's more like a bonfire to shed some light and inspiration, warm your heart and put a smile on your face. Duty done, Pigat is returning to, among other things, his *Boxcar Campfire* project, acoustic guitar sessions – more fuel to add to myriad, ongoing projects of a local musician who is catching ears, worldwide. [K](#)

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of *Our Clinic*.

...Climate action from pg. 11

disaster. The science is clear. We need to start decreasing greenhouse emissions quickly and immediately."

Cavanaugh emphasizes "We could be transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources now, but there is a lack of support by the federal and provincial governments. Trudeau has continued existing subsidies to the fossil fuel industry and is even promoting the tar sands industry. All this, while elsewhere the world is on

the cusp of phasing out fossil fuel usage. Entire nations, like Sweden, are making commitments to become fossil fuel free."

Where is Canada's sustainable energy plan? Where is the federal government's vision for the future? Where are our solar homes? These are among the urgent questions being asked by Huntley, Cavanaugh and an increasing number of Canadians, who are witnessing the disruption of the climate and the collapse of life on Earth.

These two engineers – like so many

global citizens – are very aware of the numerous examples from other jurisdictions where government incentives are facilitating the immediately essential transition to renewable energy. For example, they point out that, in Germany, there are about 1.5 million photovoltaic systems, generating about seven percent of the country's electricity. Note there are more hours of sunshine each year here than in Germany.

"Canada is rich in renewable energy

sources including wind, geothermal and solar. We can make the switch to a clean and green future and can have a stronger economy and healthier society for it," state Huntley and Cavanaugh.

It is now time for engineers and geoscientists to ask these existential questions. And to immediately begin to urgently search for answers and solutions as a top priority. This is at the heart and soul of their chosen work and the expectations of humanity. [K](#)

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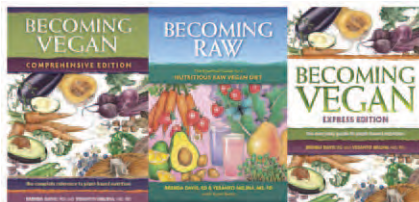
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Independent Media Marie Aspiazu

MEDIA

Big Three's "low cost" data plans are a bad joke

Back in March, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) closed the doors on Wi-Fi based Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNOs), such as Sugar Mobile. It was a blow for consumers who have been long been burdened with prohibitive wireless bills.

Wi-Fi based MVNOs could have provided relief to mobile consumers by creating real competition for the Big Three: Bell, Telus and Rogers. But instead of taking the obvious action, the CRTC proposed yet another lengthy consultation period and requested that the incumbents roll out (poorly defined) low-cost data plans as a means of addressing wireless affordability.

The Big Three's proposed sweet deal: half a gigabyte of data for \$30 per month, which is higher than existing offerings per gigabyte and doesn't even include talk or text. Insulting, right?

If you don't know this already, people in Canada pay some of the highest cell phone bills in the world. When compared to other countries' data allowances, Canada sits in an embarrassing position. See <https://twitter.com/RewheelResearch/status/991688782486401024>

But why doesn't Canada have unlimited data plans? Big telecom claims they already have plans with "gen-

erous" data amounts and that they need this usage-based approach in order to cover the costs of expanding their networks and keep up with a rising data usage.

Nevertheless, back in December, the Big Three surprised us with a genuine improvement – a deal of 10GB for \$60. The catch: it was only available for a weekend. But it came to show that the Big Three are able to offer mobile consumers a much better offer. So why not make it permanent?

If the CRTC thinks this is the solution to wireless affordability that Canada is hungry for, it has clearly not been listening to the people.

The CRTC's recent decision is a setback for the Canadian wireless market, which is already suffering from the lack of competition and we simply can't afford to wait through yet another review "within the 2020 timeframe." And, of course, there is no guarantee.

People in Canada are increasingly struggling to pay

their high cell phone bills, if they can even afford a cell phone at all. Faced with a rising appetite for data, we can't afford to continue to fall behind and let the digital divide widen in an era where connectivity is essential to everyday activities.

This is why OpenMedia is now turning its attention to Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, Navdeep Bains, who has the authority to bring more choice to our cell phone market and lower costs, by overruling the CRTC and mandating access for MVNOs. This avenue is almost guaranteed to drive our mobile prices down by bringing in new players to the market and forcing the Big Three out of complacency, as opposed to the CRTC's current piecemeal approach.

Simply put, the Big Three's proposed low data plans are a slap in the face. If the CRTC thinks this is the solution to wireless affordability that Canada is hungry for, it has clearly not been listening to the people that it is supposed to serve.

Canadians are demanding affordable data at <https://act.openmedia.org/affordabledatanow>

Marie Aspiazu is a campaigner and social media specialist at OpenMedia, openmedia.org

How climate change is increasing forest fires around the world



by Anne-Sophie Brändlin

Have wildfires increased globally over recent years? And if so, is global warming to blame? Research has illuminated this, along with what wildfires do to us and our environment, and which areas are most vulnerable.

Unusually large wildfires ravaged Alaska and Indonesia in 2015. The following year, Canada, California and Spain were devastated by uncontrolled flames. In 2017, massive fires devastated regions of Chile.



Studies show that especially the Russian and Canadian boreal forests are increasingly threatened by wildfire, as temperatures are rising faster in these northern regions than in other areas of the planet.

So, have wildfires actually increased globally, or does it just seem that way because we're tuned in more to bad news and social media?

Extensive studies have found that large forest fires in the western US have been occurring nearly five times more often since the 1970s and 80s. Such fires are burning more than six times the land area as before and lasting almost five times longer.

What's more, wildfire season – meaning seasons with higher wildfire potential – has universally become longer over the past 40 years. This trend is something

Jason Funk, senior climate scientist with UCS [Union of Concerned Scientists, ucsusa.org] is very worried about.

According to Funk, not only US forests are endangered by increasing wildfires; the trend has been that wildfires are burning more area around the world. “In recent years, there have been big fires in Siberia and various other places around the world where we typically don't see large-scale wildfires,” he said.

Projections by the UCS suggest that wildfires could get four, five and even six times as bad as they currently are within this century.

What is the main reason wildfires are increasing?

Funk has been researching the impact of climate change on landscapes in the US and says there is very well documented scientific evidence that climate change has been increasing the length of the fire season, the size of the area burned each year and the number of wildfires.

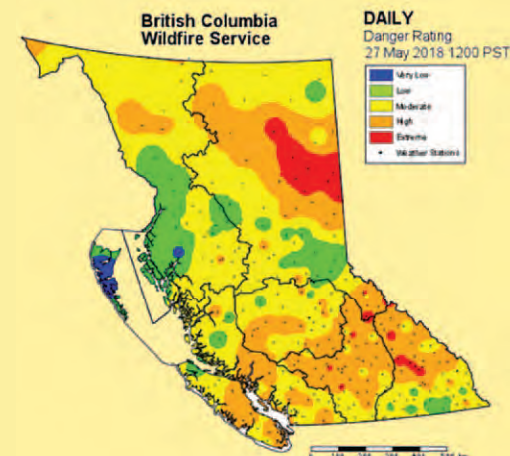
Wildfires are typically either started accidentally by humans – such as a burning cigarette carelessly tossed out of a window – or by natural causes like lightning.

These “ignition events” don't have a major effect on the scale of the fire, says Funk. But what does affect scale are prevailing climate conditions. And these have become warmer and drier due to climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions, via the greenhouse effect, are causing the global temperature to increase and the climate to change. This enhances the likelihood of wildfires.

Why? Because warmer temperatures increase evaporation, which means the atmosphere draws more moisture from soils, making the land drier. A warmer climate also leads to earlier snowmelt, which causes soils to be drier for longer. And dry soils become more susceptible to fire.

Fire Danger Rating

The fire danger rating (i.e. the risk of a wildfire starting) for the province is updated daily at approximately 2 pm.



BC wildfires burning now

Wildfires in BC as of May 27, 2018: 227

Allie Lake, 55 km northwest of Kamloops

Size: 2,700 hectares (est.)

Status: Out of control as of May 28

Tommy Lakes, approx. 29km northeast of mile 109

Hwy 97 (Alaska Highway) Size: 16,954 hectares

Status: Evacuation order in effect as of May 28

Xusum Creek: Approx. 10 km northeast of D'Arcy and 35 km west of Lillooet, near Anderson Lake.

Size: 500 hectares (est.)

Status: Out of control.

Source: www2.gov.bc.ca

“The areas where wildfires are taking place are always areas that [have become] drier and hotter, and where spring has come earlier,” said Funk. Drier conditions and higher temperatures increase not only the likelihood of a wildfire to occur, but also the duration and the severity of the wildfire.

That means when wildfires break out, they expand faster and burn more area as they move in unpredictable ways. “They really take off and get out of control more frequently than in the past,” said Funk.

What else is increasing wildfires?

A less direct climate-driven effect is pest outbreaks that have killed a lot of trees. Pests make forests more susceptible to wildfire, according to Funk.

“We know that these pest outbreaks have been caused by climate change, because there hasn’t been anything like that in the past 500 years, perhaps even 1,000 years,” he said. Insects are responding to warmer conditions, Funk explained, taking advantage of the longer summer season which grants them longer breeding circles and faster reproduction. “We can link those effects to the warmer temperatures that we’ve seen in the places where wildfires have been taking place.”

While human activities such as logging and mining are known to influence the likelihood of wildfires as well, many of the areas that have seen recent increases in wildfires are relatively unaffected by human land use. This suggests that climate change is a major factor driving the increase in fires, according to UCS.

What threats do these wildfires pose?

Forest fires aren’t necessarily bad. In fact, fire is a natural and beneficial part of many forest ecosystems; we need to allow some fires to burn as they are necessary for the ecosystems to stay healthy.

Over the decades, undergrowth builds up on the forest floor, so when a fire burns through, that provides space for larger, more mature trees that are more fire-resistant. But the unnatural increase in wildfires is causing entire forests to burn down uncontrollably. This is bad for the environment, and for us.


Wildfires pose risks to human life, property and infrastructure. Forest fires directly kill plants and animals, also causing a loss of habitat. But the biggest problem is that the scale of these fires has increased to the degree that they themselves have become significant contributors of greenhouse gas emissions. After all, trees absorb and store carbon from the atmosphere, so the more trees that burn down, the harder it is to combat climate change in the future. And this is dangerous, Funk said.

“It creates a feedback loop: the fires create more emissions, which, in turn, contribute to more global warming, which will then cause more fires,” Funk said. “Fires are not the enemy; they are an effect of an underlying process, so we need to address the problem rather than the symptoms of that problem.”

What areas are most affected by wildfire?

Forests increasingly affected by fire and climate change, and which are thus the most vulnerable, are in the boreal region. This stretches across the northern hemisphere through Alaska, Canada, Scandinavia and Russia.

Boreal forest comprises almost a third of forested land in the world and plays an important role in absorbing and storing carbon dioxide. Studies show that especially the Russian and Canadian boreal forests are increasingly threatened by wildfire, as temperatures are rising faster in these northern regions than in other areas of the planet.

Funk warns that since rising temperatures are transforming many landscapes, “We’re likely to see more wildfires in more places than just the boreal forest in the future.” 

Source: DW Akademie (www.dw.com).

...*Infrastructure Bank* from pg. 13

electricity production, between 2008 and 2014 Ontarians overpaid for electricity by as much as \$37 billion. The biggest IPP in Ontario is TransCanada Corp.; others include Bruce Power, TransAlta, NextEra, Brookfield, and Enbridge. The long-term contracts with these IPPs mean that Ontarians will be overpaying by billions of dollars for electricity for many years.

Similarly in BC, taxpayers have a \$50 billion secondary debt burden under IPP contracts, according to retired economist Erik Andersen, and they are paying “exorbitant premiums” because of this partial privatization of BC Hydro.

So with P3s and partial privatizations now considered somewhat “toxic” by much of the taxpaying public, it appears that a new euphemism of “asset recycling” has been created, along with a new strategy of selling off assets in order to build new ones. Conveniently, all this is happening at the same time that rates for borrowing from private lenders are low.

The growing hype about “asset recycling” might well appeal to politicians, unless the public catches on and understands what’s happening. Pension managers team up with private investors to take stakes in big assets, such as Australia’s Port of Melbourne – the country’s largest container terminal and the so-called “jewel in the crown” – which the government is hoping will sell/lease for \$6 billion in order to finance other infrastructure.

In late September 2016, the deal for the Port of Melbourne was signed for \$7.3 billion, with the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) taking one fifth ownership, along with China Investment Corp and several others.

Needlessly starved for capital, governments are doing everything but take back their own monetary powers.

Hidden History

For decades (1938 to 1974), the publicly-owned Bank of Canada funded a wide range of public infrastructure projects by providing near-zero interest loans to federal and provincial governments, without causing inflationary problems or debt to private and foreign lenders. That hidden history is now emerging, thanks to the efforts of many.

By contrast, the Canada Infrastructure Bank looks like a Trojan Horse that could usher in more indebtedness and more corporate control – as neofeudal landlords – over major infrastructure such as water and


wastewater systems, electricity systems, airports, ports, etc.

The founding members of COMER have long questioned neoliberalism’s economic model based on exponential growth, with escalating private profits considered supreme. As COMER Vice-chair Herb Wiseman told me by email, “P3s are not really about government financing because of scarce money, but another con job by the corporations to expand their operations in order to enhance shareholder value. It is made to look like governments are asking for this form of help when in fact it serves the corporate interests for never-ending growth on a finite planet.”

Globe and Mail columnist Konrad Yakabuski has urged “sober second thought” about infrastructure spending, citing examples in Spain, Greece and Japan (seduced by low borrowing rates from private lenders) where massive spending has created “money pit” infrastructure that nobody uses. Yakabuski noted, “If government spending on superlatively smooth highways, sleek subways and far-stretching fast trains was the ticket to success, Japan, Spain, and Greece would lead the global economy. Instead, infrastructure spending has been a major source of their debt-induced woes.” Yakabuski refers to “our infrastructure envy,” suggesting that Canada is being herded down a path that other governments have already followed into further massive debt to private lenders.

Renowned economist Michael Hudson (author of *Killing the Host*) bluntly warns that this path is “the road to debt serfdom,” with a rising financial oligarchy “impoverishing the 99%.”

The Trudeau government’s appointment of a banker from Bank of America Merrill Lynch who advised on the creation of the new Canadian Infrastructure Bank (CIB) was the most politicized appointment possible, aside from appointing BlackRock’s Larry Fink himself.

Meanwhile, on May 18, 2016 the *Financial Post* reported that Mark Wiseman, the chief executive of the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, is leaving that post in June to take “a senior leadership role” at BlackRock in September 2016. 

Excerpted from **Beyond Banksters: Resisting the New Feudalism** by Joyce Nelson. Also just published, the sequel, **Bypassing Dystopia: Hope-filled Challenges to Corporate Rule**. Watershed Sentinel Books.

www.watershedsentinel.ca/books
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Events

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JUN 7

Yarrow Willard gives a free talk on "Plant Communication." (yarrowwillard.com) 6:30-8PM, at Banyen Books. 3608 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver. banyen.com, 604-737-8858.

JUN 8-9

Matt Kahn "Your Soul's Evolution." Author of Everything is Here to Help You. Evening talk & day-long immersion. At Unity of Vancouver, 5840 Oak St. Tickets & info: banyen.com or call Banyen at 604-737-8858.

JUN 10

Diana Beresford-Kroeger Call of the Forest: The Forgotten Wisdom of Trees. Film screening, talk,

Q&A. At Unity of Vancouver, 5840 Oak St. Tickets & info: banyen.com or call Banyen at 604-737-8858.

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VANCOUVER: Dreamhealer Integrative Healing Workshop with Dr. Adam McLeod. Two unique group healing sessions. Learn how to integrate powerful healing tools into your life. Seating limited. (No workshops in 2019) Register online at www.dreamhealer.com

JUN 11

Experience a Shamanic Power Initiation at a FREE Open House in Vancouver: JUN 11, 7:30PM. FREE ONLINE Open House JUN 27, 7PM. Hosted by Institute of Shamanic Medicine. RSVP by

email to info@shamanicmedicine.ca
www.shamanicmedicine.ca

JUN 15-17

Basic Holistic Ear Reflexology Certificate Weekend Course. \$395+ GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JUN 23

"Liberate Your Lineage: Healing the Generations Ahead & Behind" – A psychotherapeutic & shamanic approach to family freedom. One-day workshop 11-5 PM, Vancouver, \$120 (tax included). For info: liberateyourlineage@gmail.com

JUL 6-8

Basic Holistic Foot Reflexology Certificate Weekend Course. \$395+ GST. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, www.pacificreflexology.com

JUL 8-14

Trager® Somatic Body Therapy Training: Learn to bring comfort to people's lives while being gentle on yourself. July 8-14, 2018, Vancouver. info@chrisbruels.ca 250-897-6454, www.facebook.com/events/180935715855060/

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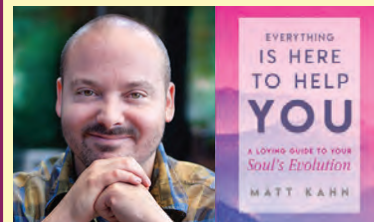
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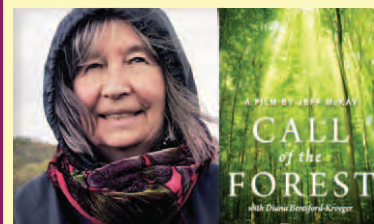


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